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THE CHURCH *at the heart of the* Worldwide Christian Community

Problems facing Christians from around the world meeting at Hangchow, China, 1938

ESTHER BOORMAN STRONG
Assistant Secretary, International Missionary Council

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

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NOTE: *This statement of the problems facing the International Missionary Council and the program for the 1938 meeting at Hangchow, China, is based on the official minutes of the Committee of the Council and previous statements by the officers.* E.B.S.

THE CHURCH *at the heart of the* WORLD WIDE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY MARKED A GREAT ERA of missionary activity, truly astonishing in its proportions. The Protestant churches spread from the West, from Europe and especially from North America, to the Far East and to India, to Persia and the Near East and into the heart of Africa. In 1793 William Carey had just reached India and in 1807 William Morrison was a lonely pioneer in Canton, the first of this great movement. In 1929, the peak year, there were over thirty thousand foreign missionaries in active service supported by contributions of not far from sixty million dollars a year.* The past century has been the greatest chapter in the history of the Christian Church. It has witnessed exploration and expansion not only geographically around the world but into many areas of life. Over five hundred languages have been reduced to writing and the Bible translated and printed for as many peoples. Groups of Christians have come to worship together in Christ's name and thus the Church has come into being in many lands. From these groups of Christians, strengthened in their religious life by the Church, have radiated streams of Christian influence that have leavened society. The missionary movement that carried the message of Christ to foreign lands has been backed by the prayers and conviction of countless Christians in the West. It has been subject to the frailty of human planning but with all of its weaknesses and limitations it may yet justly be said that "the missionary movement of the past century has been the most notable out-pouring of life in the main unselfish in the service of alien peoples which the world has ever seen."* As a result of this missionary activity, Christian churches have been established and the beginnings of a world Christian community is in evidence.

The world which gave birth to that missionary movement has vastly changed. Nineteenth century liberalism has given way to new philosophies born out of the struggles and agonies of the war and the economic disasters that followed it. These forces are creating a new world, dominated by movements hostile to Christianity at their very source. Science has put at their command controls over human destiny that no previous age has known. The idea of a totalitarian state is not new but formerly it was set up through force and maintained by an army. Today it is still a military control but once in power it employs, to support its ends, all the avenues of approach to the human mind, education, literature, economic life, even religion. The new totalitarianism is insidious in its methods and eats at the very roots of the life of the spirit. Never has Christianity been so dangerously challenged as it is today.

Political events of far-reaching character have been thrust upon humanity by the misery and hopelessness of its economic suffering. Russia revolted

*Latourette, Kenneth Scott, *Missions Tomorrow*, Harper & Brothers, 1936.

against its age-old oppression and embraced communism. To find a way out of economic floundering Italy accepted a dictator and follows him blindly. Germany, unable to bear the suffering of the demands of an impossible treaty, looked for salvation by way of the blood purge and a dictator. When Spain, oppressed by entrenched privilege, sought to modify the oppression by legal means it was thrown into bloody civil war by its masters. France is torn by strife but steadied by the fear of the renewed vitality of her enemy across the Rhine. In America a depression that throws 12,000,000 of its population into unemployment rocks the economic basis of the nation to its foundations. Japan has learned well her lesson of imperialism and with well-known arguments of economic need seeks to justify her attempts to dominate her eastern neighbor. Africa has not been untouched in these past ten years. The industrialization of Africa has gone on apace and more and more Africans are coming to know the West and its industrial civilization. Some areas of Africa have changed government. The fact that the new government is a mandate does not alter the fact that it has changed from German to British or French. Nor has the conquest of Ethiopia gone unnoticed. To the disillusioned eyes of Africa it appears that a League of white nations would not move to protect a black nation any more than it would a yellow nation. Latin America has witnessed profound changes since 1928. Mexico has established a people's government, in some ways as radical as Moscow. Her efforts to throw off the hierarchy of the Roman Church has led to religious persecution. To the south of her, Uruguay and Bolivia have been torn by international strife. This has been a period of unrest and struggle and economic hardship throughout Latin America. In all parts of the world we face a diminishing of international trust and coöperation and a growth of economic lawlessness in the international as well as the national realm. Peace rests on the old perilous basis that might makes right.

The most outstanding of these movements are the two opposing forces of Communism and Fascism, each embodying a totalitarian conception of the state, and each hostile to the basic principles of Christianity. Each claims a salvation by way of a concrete program which promises more abundant life. And because the conflict is a violent life-and-death struggle, each demands the final allegiance of all its subjects. The demands of these forces tend more and more to bring them into armed conflict and all the dark horror of war looms on the horizon.

The world is moving fast from the days when one could speak confidently of Christian nations or the power in public life and society of Christian principles. The dominant forces in many parts of the world today are not Christian, nor is the social order they envisage. They are blind to Christian idealism and either ignore it or are hostile to it. Youth is indoctrinated with other ideals. The mass movements are in the saddle and Christianity must suffer the consequences.

Nor are the great ethnic religions left untouched by this world upheaval. Mohammedanism suffered a severe blow when it lost the caliphate and

Turkey turned its face westward. The secularization of the state which had for centuries served as the leader of Mohammedanism left Moslems adrift. Modernists within the ranks of Islam are rethinking their position in the light of modern conditions. They stand, a great block of humanity in need of salvation. Hinduism no longer exercises unchallenged its sway over caste and outcaste alike. The outcastes by the thousands are leaving its ranks to join other religious groups or to remain apart, a secular and dangerous force. Buddhism as well has undergone vast changes. The conventional practices of religion have lost their hold. The younger intellectuals are unwilling to perform ceremonies which seem to them based on superstition. They will not give their allegiance to a code of thought and morality that is foreign to the proved facts of science and that offers no help in the face of the baffling problems of the present day. But it is not only the intellectuals for whom the old religions are losing their hold. The revolt of the depressed classes of India demonstrates dramatically the restlessness of masses in the face of the old inhibitions of their inherited religion. This disintegration of religion and growing secularism are due not so much to a determined drive on the part of the atheists as to bewilderment and uncertainty in the presence of vast forces in the world. Man demands something tangible to which to cling, something concrete to help him out of his misery, something lofty to fulfill his yearning for perfection. Communism symbolizes this in the red flag, the common blood of humanity; Hitler proposes an ideal of racial purity; Japan never questions the divine origin of the Imperial House.

Religion is challenged as to its bearing on the great needs of humanity, and the moral basis of society. Mankind today is chiefly concerned with man's relation to man. The existence of God is doubted or ignored and man's relation to God is thought of as unimportant. Religion is considered the refuge of the weak and the despairing, fit only for those who wish to draw apart from the struggle of the world. That religion might have a profound bearing on man's relation to man is denied. It is considered a negative force, a check on man's lower passion or at best a vague force that may lead man to do good. In contrast to this, men today are seeking a way out of world chaos. They are following the gods of Fascism and Communism and pledging their full enthusiasm and allegiance. Old religions have lost their grip, and in the empty heavens the place of gods is taken by the myths of race, blood, nation, state. In these men are seeking an answer to their economic need. They set up new gods to be worshipped. In so far as the state is impeded in its purpose by any religion, it declares war against that religion. This aspect of the world situation is of fundamental and grave importance.

Christianity, confronted by this worldwide danger, finds itself the custodian of a great faith that emphasizes the supreme value of personality in a mechanized age, the brotherhood of all men in an age of increasing race antagonism and national tension, the spirit of peace in a war-torn world, and the worship of God, the Father, when the material dialectic challenges the fundamental realities of the spiritual life and faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior

and Redeemer of men. The Church is facing persecution and the possibilities of annihilation in more than one country. Everywhere secular forces threaten the freedom and vitality of Christian education. The life of the Church, the right of conversion, the liberty of witness, all are threatened, less or more, in country after country. It is a day that calls for faith and courage.

It is obvious that the great problems that are demanding the thought and action of mankind today are international justice and peace, economic security and uplift, and religious realignment. The international situation is inflamed by a fear of war and destruction: the economic situation is inflamed by fear of hunger and privation. The hunger of the great masses is easy to forget while we talk of other things, but it is there, the undertone of so much of the world's life. The attraction of the Marxian dialectic lies in the fact that it seems to explain the world in which we find ourselves, and offers an apocalyptic hope of issue into a better world by the working of an inexorable law. If war should come with all the diabolical force of destruction science can produce and with human passions unleashed, many believe it will mean the destruction of civilization. The last war showed how all the peoples of the earth pay the penalty for war today. Dictators declare for peace, but it is peace on their own terms. Peoples in all parts of the world call for peace but they call also for justice and it is doubtful which will win their allegiance, justice or peace. The choice is being demanded of men and women throughout the world today.

The demand for justice for one's self alone, or for one's people, is a root cause of war. Justice for the world at large and for all people without fear for oneself will lead inevitably to peace. But this is a Christian doctrine and needs a Christian society to give it reality.

We need justice in the world today. We need economic justice for the underprivileged in the countries of the West; for the underprivileged in the great masses of Asia and Africa. We need political justice both nationally and internationally. We need social justice and racial justice. But justice implies a standard of judgment. It is here that the Christian sees the greatest danger in the world situation for until Christ is the universal standard for justice the world will have "wars and rumors of wars."

The primary need of the world in the view of Christians will be a wider acceptance of Christ as the object of our ultimate allegiance, as a standard of judgment of the world and ourselves, and as the Savior of men from themselves. In Him we may know God who gives meaning to the world and to our individual lives. Confronted by this world situation, the Church has two tasks, (a) that of witnessing to the faith by which it lives, applying that faith in practical living in the midst of an unbelieving generation, and (b) that of educating its own membership to understand both the menacing situation of today and the responsibility of making faith a stronger living force. In a day when, in East and West, men are struggling to save themselves and the world without any religion the Church must declare, with convincing power and in ways that the world will understand, its message to all men.

A WORLD CHRISTIAN COUNCIL

These tasks demand a measure of unity and of concerted action, which the Church already possesses more than it knows. The local Christian Church is a spiritual fellowship, a center in which are generated Christian influences. While independent in varying degrees, the local churches are links with other churches of similar historic background and belief in great church bodies. These churches have accepted as the very essence of their life the responsibility of evangelism, of telling others about Christ and what Christ means and may mean in the lives of men and society. They have accepted this responsibility not only for their own country but for those parts of the world where there are no churches. To carry on the work abroad they established Boards or Societies of Foreign Missions. In certain realms of activity, coöperation with the work of other churches was necessary or desirable and the North American Boards organized in 1893 the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. Twenty-seven other countries have similar national coöperative organizations which in turn coöperate in the International Missionary Council. In lands where the church is the fruit of the missionary activity of the nineteenth and twentieth century the national councils include both missionaries and churches, but rest primarily on the churches and national Christians. In this way the churches as they face a world that must be won to Christ are united in a program of work surmounting their theological differences. In the International Missionary Council all the Protestant churches of the world are represented. The Church universal is a spiritual reality; in confronting the hostile non-Christian world it has forged an effective instrument for undertaking its work coöperatively.

In 1928 the International Missionary Council met on the Mount of Olives. To this gathering were invited an equal number of nationals from the churches founded by the missionary movement. The meeting was historic and its findings of fundamental significance from the point of view of missionary planning. Another world meeting of the Council is called for 1938 in Hangchow, China, but this time it is representatives of the churches, east and west, north and south, who will come together to pool their experiences and discover how they may best work together in confronting worldwide problems.

The Council meeting at Hangchow is to bring into relief the work of the Christian churches around the world as they grapple with the situation day by day. Christian forces are at work in many lands and in a multitude of ways, making Christ known on every continent and applying His mind and spirit and teaching to concrete situations. The stronger churches are helping the weaker churches and together they are uniting in Christian missionary activity. Out of this continuing flow of life come experiences that are helpful and suggestive for the entire Christian Church. This world conference will make these known. The meeting being held in the Far East with an especially

large delegation from the countries of Asia, the greatest emphasis will inevitably be on the problems of the churches of these lands, but with reference to the world situation and their part in the church. Out of the wealth of experience both success and failure will illuminate the path of true progress. Experience will show essentials that cannot be forfeited even in the face of severest persecution and also the non-essentials that perhaps we have mistaken for essentials. The work done between now and 1938 will not be the writing of reports by selected commissions, nor merely preparation for a conference, but part of the ongoing of the churches, lifted into prominence by the pooling of experience around the world.

The purpose of the Council meeting is to focus the work that is already being done on the topics outlined by the International Missionary Council and thus lift them up into importance as contributing to the progress of the Kingdom of God in all parts of the world.

The topics agreed upon by the Committee of the Council are:

The Church

I. The Faith by which the Church Lives.
II. The Witness of the Church.
III. The Life of the Church.
  (a) Studies of the inner life of the Church, its worship, the religious life of the home, and the problems of religious education.
  (b) The enlisting of lay voluntary leadership.
  (c) The nature and meaning of the Church.
  (d) The relation of the Church to Christian movements outside the organized Church.
  (e) The relation of the Church to the cultural heritage of the different countries.
  (f) The bearing of education on the life of the Church.
  (g) The bearing of Medical Missions on the life of the Church.
  (h) The work of the missionary and his training for service.
IV. The Church and its Environment.
  (a) The economic basis of the Church.
  (b) The Church and the changing economic and social order.
  (c) The problem of war.
  (d) The challenge of the modern state to the Church.
V. Closer Coöperation.

THE CHURCH

THE CENTRAL THEME FOR THE HANGCHOW MEETING is the Church. The Church is recognized as the heart of the Christian community. From it generates the life blood of Christian activity. Without the organized Church any Christian movement will trickle out and be lost in the sands of secular society. It is not the purpose of the meeting to center on the mechanics of church organization, but rather on the Church universal, the worldwide fellowship of Christians unified in the worship of God. This theme was chosen in the belief that the organized Church is the very essence of ongoing Christianity. Without it Christianity as a movement is a rope of sand. Only with an insistent and consistent emphasis on the Church in whatever organized form is best suited to the genius of the people who form its fellowship can Christians make their fullest impact on society. It is essential, therefore, that the Church be in reality the center of fellowship, worship and purposeful activity. This fellowship must be worldwide as well as local, challenging, functioning, appealing, and satisfying, to which young and old, rich and poor, native and foreign, all will be drawn and feel at home. The Council as an interdenominational, international organization advocates no special type of organization but cannot escape the realities of the historic progress of Christianity in which the Church universal has come into being. In 1928 at the Council Meeting in Jerusalem the relation of the younger and older churches was one of the seven topics discussed. Today problems of evil are recognized as worldwide and the whole Church the world around should be united in combating evil and extending the power of Christ in the world. The "home base" of missions is recognized to be wherever there is a Christian Church. Stronger churches will aid weaker churches but essentially the world mission of Christianity is the task of every church in fellowship with other members of the Christian world community.

As the meeting will be held in China especial interest will be taken in the problems of the churches that are a young and struggling part of a great and ancient non-Christian environment. The work here throws up in intense relief many of the most fundamental problems less clearly seen where the church is in a community that has had many centuries of Christian tradition. The life and problems of these younger Christian communities as living members of the universal historic Christian fellowship is of vital importance to the worldwide Christian Church.

Within this central theme a five-fold study will be made.

I. *The Faith by Which the Church Lives*

The statement of the Christian message as the basis of worldwide evangelistic work accepted at the Jerusalem Meeting in 1928 has been so widely used throughout the world that it is needless to repeat this work. Accepting the Jerusalem statement as basic, however, there is need to take into account the characteristic modern challenges to the Christian faith.

In 1937 there is to be held at Oxford a world meeting of the Universal Council of Christian Life and Work. The subject of this conference is The Church, Community, and State. Some fundamental thinking is being done in this realm and it is proposed to use this material wherever possible for the 1938 Hangchow meeting and build on this foundation so ably laid. It is hoped that the churches around the world will study this material and make it their own and enrich it from their own experience and that out of this will come fresh and arresting statements on the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

In North America a committee appointed by the Foreign Missions Conference is working in coöperation with the committee for the Oxford meeting so that each step of the way may be planned for the maximum benefit of the Christian churches.

II. *The Witness of the Church*

The Christian Church cannot be static and be alive. Christianity is a dynamic religion, an expanding religion. Therefore the witness of the Church means primarily the expansion of the Church. In almost all of the countries of the East and Africa the past few years have witnessed vigorous efforts to spread Christianity.

In Japan there was carried out under the inspiration of Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa the Kingdom of God Movement, which was a great effort to carry forward the Gospel among the people of Japan along the two lines of evangelism and the establishment of economic coöperation. The Japanese Christian leaders are deeply conscious of the fact that the Church is so largely a middle-class, educated and urban affair, and they are earnestly desirous of finding the way to reach the masses, not only in the cities but even more in the villages. The Kingdom of God Movement has come to an end, as planned. Many fertile expedients devised in the course of it, such as the peasant Gospel schools, have come to play a prominent part in Japanese Christian work. At an All-Japan Christian Conference, held at the end of November 1935, it was decided to launch another nationwide evangelistic movement, and this movement bids fair to be integrated even more closely with the life of the Church than was the case with the Kingdom of God Movement. Dr. Kagawa is again active in its leadership. Special attention is being devoted to the preparation of workers for rural areas. Forward steps to a greater measure of unity among churches are being proposed.

In China the Five Years' movement launched in 1930 came to an end last year, but another movement of the same kind has been begun. It is now plain that the Five Years' Evangelistic Movement saved the Church from the spirit of despair and bewilderment, and enabled it during a period of unexampled national difficulty to retain the spirit of faith and witness. From all parts of China comes news of the receptiveness of people toward the Gospel. The recent campaign carried out by three Christian professors among the

students of not only Christian but government universities met with an astonishing reception, thousands of students flocking to the meetings. In certain parts of China a strong revivalist movement has developed, and though the organized churches are faced in some places by divisive tendencies, no one can fail to perceive the tokens of the workings of the Spirit.

The Philippines has launched a four-year evangelistic campaign under the leadership of the Commission on Evangelism of the National Christian Council. In its first printed statement setting forth its plans the Commission states that "the Commission believes that a unified, simultaneous approach to the great task of winning men to Christ will make the best possible preparation for the World Consultation to be held in China in 1938. It will help the representatives of the Filipino church to make a vital contribution to that meeting and it will enable the Christian movement in the Philippines to profit by the spirit and findings of the 400 delegates who meet at Hangchow." It opens with the statement "The primary duty of the Christian Church is to Witness." It calls for an awakened individual, an awakened church, an awakened community, and an awakened nation.

In India it is difficult to write with measured language of the evangelistic opportunity now presented. While it is true that among the "depressed classes" or "exterior castes" there is greater immediate opportunity than in any other part of the Indian people, it is essential to recognize that in many other strata of the Indian population a new situation is presented. It is reported from North India that never for years have so many able enquirers from both Islam and Hinduism been interested in studying the Scriptures. This is not to say that Indian Islam and caste Hinduism do not still present immense difficulties to the Christian Church. It does mean that there is a certain loosening of bonds and weakening of barriers.

Among the Depressed Classes there has come into being a situation fraught with immense hope and immense peril. Much has been said in the public press of the decision of Dr. Ambedkar, the representative of the Depressed Classes at the Round Table Conference in London, to lead them out of Hinduism. On no account can the Christian Church appear to enter into competition for the outcastes with the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, or be deemed to be bidding for them by the offer of social benefits. The most religious minds in Hinduism will watch jealously the action of Christians at this time. On the other hand, there is a profound restlessness felt throughout the millions of the Depressed Classes. They desire freedom and life, and if it is for them stated in terms of economic, social and even political change, those who know them best are convinced that there is in the movement a desire for spiritual life. In so far as they are moved towards Christianity, it is by the teaching of Christ, the attraction of His person, and the admiration aroused by the consecrated living of good Christians.

The publication of the special study of the Mass Movement throughout India, under the leadership of Bishop J. W. Pickett, has forced into the forefront of missionary policy a far-reaching question. Is the normal method of

church growth the gathering of individuals, removed it may be from their normal social environment, or is it the coming in of groups or communities? Already in the Central Provinces the missions and churches have begun to apply the lessons of the Pickett Report, and find a readiness on the part of many communities which has greatly surprised and rejoiced them. In the Telugu country the great success of the Christian movement among the Depressed Classes has led to a movement among the castes. It is universally agreed by the Indian Christians who led this movement that the factor which draws the Caste people to the Church is the spectacle of the changed lives of the Depressed Class people who have become Christians.

It is needless to say that in the presence of such movements, which affect hundreds of thousands or even millions of people, the Christian Church needs much more than human wisdom. Not only is there need for close cooperation, careful and resolute planning, and the outpouring of an immense volume of voluntary service on the part of the Indian Church, but there is need for the avoidance of such a lowering of Christian standards or contamination with economic and political designs as might offer permanent injury to the Christian witness.

In Africa in recent years there has been a steady movement towards Christianity, with large numbers added to the Christian Church. Many new areas have been opened up, even in the last five years, and the assumption of responsibility by African Christians when foreign staffs have been decreased has shown that deep roots have been struck.

In the Near East there is in the indigenous churches, especially perhaps the evangelical churches that have grown up in the last century but to some extent also in the ancient churches, a new feeling of evangelistic responsibility for the Muslims. The Near East Christian Council is undertaking a new study of the evangelistic approach to Islam, and is entering into contact with hopeful evangelistic and spiritual movements such as the Zoe Movement in Greece, within the body of the ancient Christian churches which for so many centuries have maintained their stand in the presence of Islam.

Activities in the West will also be studied with keen interest. For example, the Preaching Mission in North America is having a profound influence today and the Church of England has been carrying on a widespread evangelistic campaign in England. In North America there has been appointed a Committee on Evangelism which is issuing papers and planning conferences and retreats to stimulate thinking and action. In this way the Church leaders here and the missionaries from all parts of the world will help each other to see America's contribution in this field.

It is proposed that each country study the evangelistic activities of its own churches and the results of these studies will be incorporated into a volume devoted to this subject. There will also be papers on various types of evangelistic work in the fields of medicine, education, social service, and literature.

It is proposed also that Dr. H. Kraemer of Java make a special study of

Christianity in the modern work, with reference in particular to the non-Christian religions. The purpose of this study will be to state the fundamental position of the Christian Church as a witness bearing body in the modern world.

III. *The Life of the Church*

The fundamental question of the life of the Church will be considered from many angles and in view of the Church's approach to a world that must be won for Christ. Here are some of the subjects calling for special attention:

(a) The nature and meaning of the Church. This is of especial importance in those countries where the very existence of the Church is challenged. Everywhere there is need for the life of the Church to be more securely based upon an understanding of the great New Testament doctrine of the Church.

(b) The inner life of the Church, its worship, the religious life of the home and the problem of religious education.

(c) The enlisting and training of lay voluntary service. This is a day of great need and great opportunity and every Christian will want to take his part in helping to meet this challenge. Enlisting his services in the work of the Church and training him to effective service is of vital importance both in East and West. It is especially important that the younger, post-war generation see anew the importance of the Christian message to the world of today and the value of the Christian Church in implementing this idealism. The Church must be a place of fellowship and service for every Christian layman.

(d) The Church and Christian movements outside it. Here is a great common phenomenon. Groups of people are found devoted to the cause of Christ but are unable to see the relevance of the organized churches to the situation as they know it.

(e) The relation of the Church to the cultural inheritance of the peoples. Here we touch the difficult and important question of adapting worship, theological expression, forms of Christian leadership and service, Church architecture and so on, to the cultural type of the different countries. No Church can grow if it is felt to be foreign to the soil. Nor can it be a truly Christian Church if it becomes so national in its outlook that it is no longer spiritually part of the Church universal. The historic Christian heritage is as much a part of the cultural life of the Christian community of China, Japan and India as it is of America. We look to Northern Europe, and back of that to Rome, and Greece and Palestine in studying the riches of our Christian cultural inheritance. All of these riches must be brought to bear on the problems facing the Christian church today as well as those factors in the cultural life of the people which Christian comes to enrich.

(f) Education in its bearing upon the life of the church. Recent years have seen much attention devoted by commissions of inquiry to Christian education in all its forms, higher and lower alike. The missionary movement as a whole is not without knowledge of the policies that should be followed, but action has not been commensurate with the need. This meeting should

therefore include a definite attempt to examine, in the light of recent inquiry, the bearing of education upon the upbuilding of the Church.

(g) The bearing of medical work on the life of the Church. Much is being done in various countries along these lines which needs to be lifted up into view. Correlation of medical work of various missions into a well-knit unit within a given country, the closer integration of medical missions into the total Christian program, the larger service of medical missions to the community in studying public health problems and preventive work, the fostering of a new understanding of the physical laws of disease and modern scientific approach to the problems of health and an increasing search for the attainment of a new relationship between religion and medicine are some of the lines along which Christian medical workers hope to move.

(h) The ministry of the Christian Church holds a key to the future. The training of the ministry to enable them to make their maximum contribution to the community and to kindle other lives with their own vital evangelistic purpose is a problem that is receiving much thought. The seminaries of the West have not found the answer and yet many of the seminaries established in other lands are but replica of the training schools of the West. Groups both in the East and in the West are studying this problem and will have contributions to make at Hangchow.

(i) The work of the missionary and his training for service. This is a subject on which both East and West will have much to contribute. For many years to come probably the greatest contribution the West can make to the East is in personnel. The missionary is the foreign representative of the churches, especially designated to share with churches of other countries in their efforts to meet the non-Christian conditions. As the younger churches grow in numbers and strength, what is to be the missionary's most helpful service? How can he best be equipped for his work? A special committee has been appointed by the Foreign Missions Conference to give continuous study to this for the next five years.

IV. *The Church and its Environment*

Here we find a multitude of problems. To some extent every Church must be influenced by its environment, but equally every Church that is a living Church must be continually changing its environment. There are four major problems to which attention is to be directed for the 1938 meeting.

(a) An attempt will be made in a few typical areas in India and China to examine thoroughly the economic foundation on which the structure of Church-life and ministry is built. The economic is only one aspect of the life of the Church, but it is an important aspect. Much discussion about the self-support of the churches and of the nature of the ministry depends for its fruitfulness upon fuller knowledge of the economic aspects of the matter than is now in our possession. This work is to be carried on by the Council's Department of Social and Industrial Research and Counsel.

(b) In every part of the world the question is being asked, what is the nature of the word which a living Church should speak in relation to the rapid economic, social and political changes and clamant needs which surrounds it? It is hard to over-estimate the extent to which the pressure of the economic situation is felt as a challenge during these difficult years. Comprehensive effort will be made to face this range of questions.

(c) In West and East alike the Church is faced with the question of war, and many younger Christians feel acutely the problem forced upon the Christian conscience. Here is one of the great issues on which Christian minds throughout the world can help one another.

(d) The special problems referred to elsewhere in this pamphlet, arising from the pressure of the state upon the Church, must be realistically studied. These are, in large part, to be found within the field of education, as it becomes more and more difficult to maintain colleges and schools that enjoy a real Christian freedom. The study must also take account of the threats to conversion and religious freedom, which in some parts of the world are now becoming very grave. Fundamental to this, however, is the stand that the Church and that Christians must take if they are to be true to their faith.

V. *Closer Coöperation*

The word "coöperation" suggests consideration of a rather technical nature, but what is intended by the phrase is something of supreme practical importance. The arguments advanced in this pamphlet point to the inevitable conclusion that the Christian forces facing these great tasks can afford no diffusion and mal-distribution of effort. We pray for a united Church, but we must recognize that long before organic unity can come there are needs which must be met by close coöperation in planning and policy among bodies that are ecclesiastically separate. Already there are experiments in vigorous united activity and coöperation in areas where the situation demands it. Here again the policy of the Council is to encourage existing work and study the problem of coöperation through actual experience. We are only at the beginning of things in coöperative activities, however, and the progress made in coöperation must not conceal the fact that we have not yet united widely and deeply enough in facing together the needs of the present time, and in devising coherent policies which may be followed by each Church or mission group in its own locality.

The Committee of the International Missionary Council is deeply anxious that in preparation for this meeting there should be made a fresh effort to draw into the fellowship of prayer and labor certain Christian groups which for different reasons stand outside the Council and its related bodies, and especially that closer union be achieved with other international and interdenominational organizations such as the Universal Council of Life and Work and the World Conference on Faith and Order.

AMERICA'S SHARE IN THE CONFERENCE

North America has been allotted thirty five delegates to represent the churches of the United States and Canada. Through these men and women appointed by the Foreign Missions Conference, America will make her contribution to this world gathering. This lays a very heavy responsibility upon them and upon the people responsible for choosing them. The delegation will, of course, include both men and women. No one who will have less than five years of service on his return will be sent and a special effort will be made to include some people thirty five years old or younger. A small number of foreign missionary board executives will be designated, but the delegation will also include outstanding church laymen, pastors and leaders in certain broad fields of church endeavor here in America. The majority of delegates will be named in January, 1937, at the annual meeting of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America and they will take an active part in the preparation for the Hangchow meeting of the International Missionary Council.

So small a group could not possibly hope to represent the varied interests and activities of church life in America if it were not for an undergirding of thought and prayer by a larger circle of those deeply concerned in the welfare of the worldwide Christian Church. A special prayer leaflet written by the Baronness van Boetzelaer van Dubbledam has been published by the International Missionary Council, and it is hoped that it will be widely used by those who believe that, through the work of the Council, God is leading His Church to a richer conception of its task. Copies of these leaflets may be obtained from the office of the Council.

In order that there may be an impartial statement of factual data to undergird all of the discussions at Hangchow, the Council has launched a worldwide statistical study of Christian work. This centers at the Missionary Research Library in New York City and the results of the survey will be published in the summer of 1938. Every national council is participating in the work, which is under the direction of Mr. Joseph I. Parker.

In preparation for the Council meeting at Hangchow the Foreign Missions Conference has appointed a central committee to plan for the total American contribution and the details of making this contribution effective. In North America as elsewhere, this preparation will not be so much the writing of papers and reports as the life and work of the churches of North America, as they can be lifted up and be made of value to the worldwide Christian Church. In participating in this conference it is hoped that the churches will be stimulated to new activity and come to realize that their own work is not alone for themselves. It will be dignified and blessed by being part of a greater plan, part of the work of the Church universal. When the reality of this universal fellowship dawns fully upon us and we see in the foreign missionary movement the instrument of God in building and strengthening this fellowship, we shall indeed have entered upon a new day.

PUBLICATIONS

In preparation for the Hangchow Meeting the International Missionary Council will publish some volumes, and stimulate the publication of others. The following are suggested as especially helpful in getting a thorough understanding of the problems to be faced.

The International Review of Missions. The quarterly journal of the Council. The January issue carried a remarkable survey of the situation around the world. Each issue will have articles bearing directly on the problems of the conference. This journal for the next two years is essential to a thorough appreciation of the significance of the Hangchow Meeting. The International Missionary Council, New York City. Price for yearly subscription, $2.50.

Christianity in the Eastern Conflicts by William Paton. This book is based on a visit to the Far East, India, and the Near East. As one of the secretaries of the International Missionary Council he views the scene with special reference to the problems facing the Hangchow Meeting. May be obtained from the International Missionary Council.

Christendom and Islam, by Prebendary Cash. A historical review of the relation of two great cultures. Approximate date, March 1937. Harper & Brothers. Probable price $2.00.

Studies in the World Mission of Christianity

VOLUME I. *Church Growth in Korea*, by Alfred W. Wasson. This is a study of the relation of the political, social and economic changes on the growth of the Church. It is masterful and sympathetic, penetrating and revealing.

VOLUME II. *The Medieval Missionary*, by James Thayer Addison. This study of the conversion of the British Isles and Northern Europe throws into light a number of principles and methods of missionary work that need to be remembered today. International Missionary Council, New York. Price Vol. I, cloth, $1.00; paper, 75c. Vol. II, cloth, $2.00; paper, $1.25. Sets of Vol. I and II, cloth $2.75; paper $1.75.

Information on other material may be had by sending your name and address to the Council. All of the volumes listed above may be purchased through —

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